

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated October 18, 2006. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

As outlined above, claims 2, 4-9, and 23 stand for consideration in this application, wherein claims 1 and 3 are being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, while claims 2, 4-9 and 23 are being amended to correct formal errors and to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject invention. Claims 10-22 stand withdrawn from consideration in this application.

All amendments to the application are fully supported therein. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for holding that claim 4 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form to include all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 4 is being amended so as to be in independent form as suggested by the Examiner, and therefore now is in allowable form. Claims 2, 5-9 and 23 are being amended so as to depend from claim 4 as amended, and therefore, would be allowable at least for the same basis for allowability of claim 4.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance as set forth in the Office Action. However, Applicants will point out that the reasons for allowability of the above referenced claims are not limited to the reasons for allowance as set forth in the Office Action.

Conclusion

In view of all the above, Applicants respectfully submit that certain clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art references upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely. These differences are more

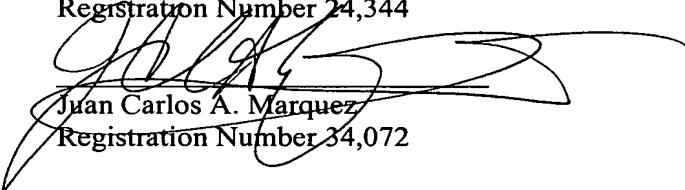
than sufficient that the present invention as now claimed would not have been anticipated nor rendered obvious given the prior art. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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